

Chevy Chase Village Police Department

General Order

Subject: COMMUNITY RELATIONS

CALEA: 45.2.1-a-b-c-d-e-f, 54.1.1-b

- New
- Amended
- Rescinds 5 -12.1

Approved:
Roy Gordon
Chief of Police



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I. POLICY

The Chevy Chase Village Police Department is committed to the principle that cooperation and positive interaction between the community and every member of the Department is a critical element in achieving the Department's goal of establishing close ties with and responding to the needs of the community. Positive community relations represent a unity of purpose between the members of the Department and the community towards a common goal of preserving the peace through equitable law enforcement. The goal of the community relations effort is to establish a strong, lasting trust and mutual respect between the community and the members of the Department based upon the fair, unprejudiced, honest, professional and sensitive conduct of each member of the Department. Achieving this goal will create an environment in which every member of the Department is able to perform his/her duties with the support and understanding of the community.

The Chevy Chase Village Police Department will not condone or tolerate behavior, practices, or attitudes by any member of the Department that may contribute, or exacerbate community problems, tensions, or grievances. Any such behavior, practices, or attitudes will be subject to reasonable and appropriate administrative and/or criminal sanctions.

The Chevy Chase Village Police Department views its mission of providing law enforcement/police services to the community in the same manner as any successful private organization would be dedicated to providing effective, fair, and professional customer service. All of the individuals within the community are the customers for whom the Department is committed to a strengthened and increased level of satisfaction.

II. PURPOSE

This General Order defines the philosophy of the Department and every employee regarding community relations and establishes the mechanics of the Department's community relations efforts.

III. GENERAL PROCEDURES

- A. Community relations efforts of the Department will identify and address any problems arising between the Department as an agency, or any of its employees, and any and all segments or individuals within the communities served by the Chevy Chase Village Police Department. The Department's community relations programs will establish formal relationships with community groups to learn of the issues and concerns impacting those groups so that pro-active responses can be developed before those issues and concerns become problem realities of criminal activity. Community relations efforts must focus on increasing the community's understanding and trust in the Department as a law enforcement agency, the current and proposed Departmental activities and programs, and the individual officers. In a similar manner, the community relations efforts of the Department will strive to increase every employees' understanding of the community's needs and concerns and every employees' fair, unprejudiced, professional and sensitive conduct towards all individuals within the community.
- B. Every member of the Department will be considered an integral part of the Department's mission to achieve its community involvement objectives. As such, every employee of the Department is responsible for promoting and assisting in the attainment of those objectives through fair and impartial conduct.
- C. In each and every contact between a member of the Department and a member of the community, the guiding principle shall be to treat the individual contacted with respect for his/her dignity. Prejudices and personal feelings and attitudes will not be allowed to negatively impact a contact between a member of the community and an employee of the Department.
- D. The Chief of Police will retain overall responsibility for the Department's community involvement programs.

IV. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PROGRAMS/ACTIVITIES

All contacts, both official and unofficial, between a member of the Department and an individual or group in the community are within the scope of the Department's community involvement program.

- A. Establishing liaison with existing community groups or establishing community groups where needed. (CALEA 45.2.1-a)
- B. Presentation of programs to community groups and organizations addressing crime prevention or other Departmental programs, objectives, activities, development, successes, or problems.
- C. Publicizing the Department's programs, objectives, activities, development, or successes through planned media press releases, interviews, and or video productions, including the local Village Crier. (CALEA 45.2.1-c, 54.1.1-b)

- D. Soliciting and gathering citizen/community input regarding the Department's policies, practices, and procedures at any opportunity and conveying that information to the Department's administrative staff, including the Chief of Police, so that the information, recommendations, and suggestions can be reviewed to develop and improve the Department's policies, procedures, and responsiveness to the community's needs. (CALEA 45.2.1-b,d)
- E. Determining community satisfaction with the police services provided by the Department by analyzing "feedback" received in community group meetings and activities, by reviewing both inquiries and complaints received from the community, and by conducting surveys and interviews of both individuals and community groups. (CALEA 45.2.1-e)
- F. An administrative or supervisory member of the Department, at the discretion of the Chief of Police, shall conduct a random audit of at least one citizen contact and/or radio call response by each member of the Department on a quarterly basis.

The audit may be conducted in person, by mail, by telephone, or in conjunction with other law enforcement related matters. The focus of the audit should be the level of the employee's competence, including any written work product, his/her behavior and attitude, and the general level of satisfaction and confidence created by the employee. The results of the random audit may be considered by supervisory officer(s) when the employee's performance is evaluated.

- G. Community and individual input, recommendations, and suggestions generated by the community survey, the random audits of employee performance, and any other contacts between the community and/or individual citizens and members of the Department will be considered in reviewing, developing, or modifying Departmental policies, procedures, practices, and programs.

V. RESOLUTION OF PROBLEMS IN THE COMMUNITY (CALEA 45.2.1-f)

- A. The Department recognizes the critical and sensitive nature of relations between the community and the police. The Department is committed to proactively responding to any actions, practices, and attitudes by its employees that may contribute to, or exacerbate, problems, tensions, or grievances within the community. A proactive and sensitive response to the early signs of such actions, practices, and attitudes that negatively impact the community may mitigate, or prevent, the development of greater problems within the community.
- B. Any Department employee who becomes aware of concerns within the community or from an individual regarding police activities or services in general, or the specific actions, practices, or attitude of an individual employee, shall advise a supervisor of those concerns within a reasonable period of time. Depending upon the urgency or severity of the information received by a supervisor, he/she will advise the Chief of Police of the information within a reasonable period of time.

- C. All levels of training are critical factors in positive community relations. As such, any and all sources of community or individual input, recommendations, and suggestions, a review of internal administrative investigations of employee conduct, consultations with those involved in the internal administrative investigations, and, if deemed reasonably necessary by the Chief of Police, input from community groups formed in an advisory capacity, will be considered in evaluating the need(s) for new or remedial training for employees and any development or modification of Departmental policies, practices, procedures or programs.